VIOLENCE GENDER & WASH

A PRACTITIONER'S TOOLKIT

Making water, sanitation and hygiene safer through improved programming and services

Toolset 3-A

Participatory tools to assess and discuss safety and services

TS3-A-2 – Adolescent girls' views on safety in cities: Cairo, Delhi, Hanoi, Kampala and Lima

Context	The Because I am a Girl (BIAAG) Urban Programme seeks to close the gaps between urban programming targeting 'youth' or 'women', by focusing on adolescent girls who often face sexual harassment and insecurity, but are also the most excluded from urban processes. This programme provides girls with a space to discuss the issues they face and to offer their own innovative ideas for making improvements to their cities.
Implementing organisations	The BIAAG Urban Programme (2013-2017) is a collaboration between Plan International, Women in Cities International (WICI) and UN-Habitat, to build safe, accountable and inclusive cities with and for adolescent girls in all their diversity. The programme is being carried out in: Cairo, Egypt; Delhi, India; Hanoi, Vietnam; Kampala, Uganda; and Lima, Peru.
Description of good practices	As part of this programme, a study was undertaken in 2012 in Cairo, Delhi, Hanoi, Kampala and Lima, which aimed to find out how adolescent girls perceive their current city in terms of safety and inclusivity, and how this is different from the views of other stakeholders in the community; to compare the responses across the five cities and countries; and to identify steps that the BIAAG urban programme should carry out to improve the situation of adolescent girls in each city. The tools used for the research included: • **Stakeholder, programme and policy mapping** – The first step was to perform desk research to develop a profile of the city's local context (including demographic information and crime statistics), within which to understand the safety and inclusion of girls. Desk research was conducted to identify key stakeholders and existing policies and programmes in each city, which provided the team with an understanding of the local context of girls' safety and inclusion at the beginning of the programme and served to outline existing gaps that the programme could help to fill. • **Key informant interviews** – Key informant interviews with a broad range of stakeholders such as members of the community, government officials and select experts helped the team to understand how members of the community perceived the situation of adolescent girls' safety and inclusion in the five cities. They were also used to identify perceived challenges and opportunities for girls in their respective cities. • **Social cartography** – Social cartography is a creative and practical way of understanding girls' experiences and visions for their cities. There are two steps to using this tool: the first asks each girl to draw a map to show the spaces she uses (the places she goes and the routes she takes) and how she feels along the way; and the second involves developing a group map where girls work in small groups to draw their visions for an ideal city. For this tool, parallel exercises were also performed with the participation of boys and the perspectives of girls and boys were compared to one another.

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- **Girls' opportunity star** – The 'girls' opportunity star for safe and inclusive cities' is a tool that involves girls in a series of focus group discussions surrounding seven points of safety and inclusion. Girls are first asked to share their personal ratings of safety and inclusion for each of these points (e.g. a girl may rate that she 'never' feels safe when using public transport). They then engage in a group discussion on the different points and share what would need to change for the ratings to be better in their city.

- **Girls' safety walk** – The girls' safety walk is a group walk through a particular area of the city where girls note, with the help of a checklist, the particular elements of the built and social environment that they feel contribute to or hinder their sense of safety. Girls then debrief on their observations, identifying priority issues they would like to see addressed and offering recommendations for making their communities safer and more inclusive.

A group of girls undertaking a safety walk as part of Plan Peru's Safer Cities workshops highlighting the risks in their city.

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| Results |

Main findings

- Very few girls claimed that they 'always' felt safe when walking in public spaces.

- Lighting was a key issue, as was vision not being obstructed.

- Some girls avoided areas that were usually empty in the afternoons and at night (Delhi), but others noted that the paths and lanes were particularly crowded in the evenings (Kampala) which made them feel unsafe.

- Lack of basic services, such as drainage systems and garbage collection, can narrow and block paths and cause girls to feel unsafe.

- In Delhi, the girls noted that the public toilets were scarce and poorly maintained, forcing them to use public spaces and putting them at risk of sexual harassment and assault.

- Girls had a sense of being under-appreciated and felt that their opinions were frequently overlooked or disregarded. They were often excluded from being able to participate meaningfully in decisions that affect them.

Mapping an ideal city

The girls and boys identified their ideal city. Specifically, the commonly recurring elements which have links to WASH included:

- **Access to basic services:** public toilets, clean water made available through the installation of taps in public spaces and water tanks;

- **Road infrastructure:** sidewalks/pavements for pedestrians (i.e. free of vendors and loiterers), wide roads, walkways, traffic lights, flyovers, zebra crossings and street crossings for differently-abled people;

- **Cleanliness:** waste baskets at every corner of the street; and

- **Housing:** organised (unlike the slums where many of them live), with planned roads and proper lighting.

Differences were seen between the focus of boys – on leisure activities – and that of girls – on infrastructure and transport.

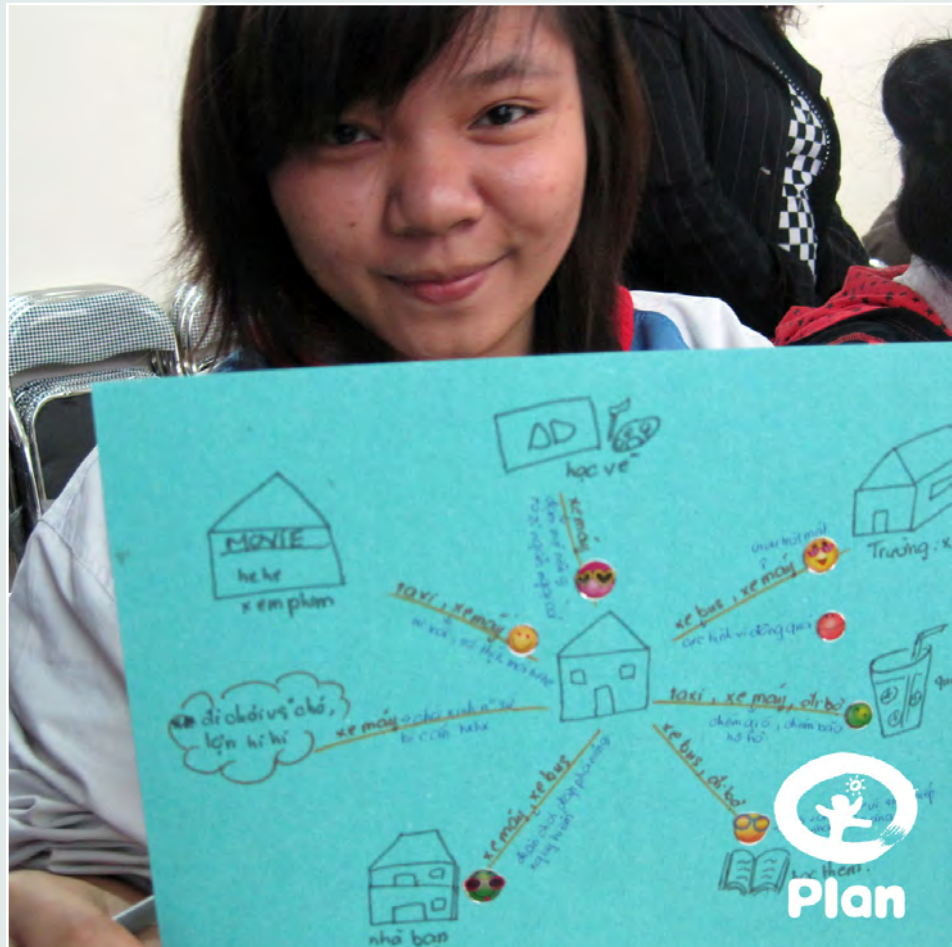| **Lessons**	- The girls noted that this was the first time they had been asked about their experiences and ideas relating to their cities. - That adolescent girls and boys experience their cities and safety in their cities in different ways. - There is a critical need to provide opportunities to include girls in decision-making processes at the municipal and national government levels. - Platforms and opportunities for adolescent girls are needed to allow them to speak out about their experiences and share their concerns.

References/links

The information above has been taken from:

- Plan International Because I am a Girl, Women in Cities International, UN-Habitat (2013) *Adolescent Girls' Views on Safety in Cities; Findings of the Because I am a Girl Urban Programme study in Cairo, Delhi, Hanoi, Kampala and Lima.* Woking UK: Plan International; Montreal, Canada: Women in Cities International; New York, USA: UN-Habitat.

- Plan International Because I am a Girl, Women in Cities International and UN-Habitat (2013) *Because I am a Girl Urban Programme: Creating Safe, Accountable and Inclusive Cities for Adolescent Girls.* Woking UK, Montreal, Canada and New York, USA: Plan International, Women in Cities International and UN-Habitat.

Videos

- Plan International, Video: 'Safer Cities: Fear holds girls back'.
Available at: **http://plan-international.org/girls/stories-and-videos/-safer-cities-fear-holds-girls-back.php** (video length, 7.30 min) [accessed 11 October 2013]. This video shows the process of mapping and girls participatory safety walks, including sanitary facilities.

- Women's Refugee Commission, Video: 'Making Work Safe: Safety Mapping Tool', Available at: **http://womensrefugeecommission.org/resources/video-gallery/making-work-safe-safety-mapping-tool** (video length 2 min) [accessed 27 March 2013]. This is an animated video on using the safety mapping tool to make work safe. It does not discuss WASH, but the short video gets across the principles of using the tool.

- Both of these videos can be found in **TS2** and on the accompanying USB stick.

An 18-year-old girl from Vietnam joined Plan's Safe City for Girls Project, which helps make cities safer, more accountable and more inclusive for girls.

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